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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/58/501)*]

58/146. Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 56/129 of 19 December 2001,

Recalling also the importance attached to the problems of rural women in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[1] the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[5]

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[6] in which Member States resolved, inter alia, to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable,

Welcoming the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,[7] as well as the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[8] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[9] which called

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[1] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[5] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[6] See resolution 55/2.

[7] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[8] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[9] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

upon Governments to mainstream the gender perspective into development at all levels and in all sectors,

Welcoming also the agreed conclusions on women's participation in and access to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session,[10]

Welcoming further the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2003 of the Economic and Social Council, adopted on 2 July 2003,[11] which stressed the need for rural development to become an integral part of national and international development policies and of the activities and programmes of the United Nations system, and called for an enhanced role for rural women at all levels of rural development, including decision-making,

Recognizing the critical role and contribution of rural women in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty,

Noting that some effects of globalization may deepen the socio-economic marginalization of rural women,

Noting also that the globalization process has had some benefits by providing opportunities for wage employment for rural women in new sectors,

Mindful of the fact that the available data and existing tools of measurement and analysis are insufficient for a full understanding of the gender implications of the processes of globalization and rural change, and their impact on rural women,

Recognizing the urgent need to take appropriate measures aimed at further improving the situation of women in rural areas,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[12]

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General and all relevant United Nations bodies to take into account, while developing future policies, plans and activities, the views expressed by Member States in their replies concerning the desirability of convening a high-level policy consultation at the governmental level, with a view to setting priorities and developing critical strategies that would meet the manifold challenges faced by rural women;

3. *Invites* Member States, in collaboration with the organizations of the United Nations and civil society, as appropriate, to continue their efforts to implement the outcome of and to ensure an integrated and coordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, including their five-year reviews, and to attach greater importance to the improvement of the situation of rural women in their national, regional and global development strategies by, inter alia:

(*a*) Creating an enabling environment for improving the situation of rural women, including integrating a gender perspective in macroeconomic policies and developing appropriate social support systems;

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[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 7* (E/2003/27), chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/44.

[11] See A/58/3 (Part I), chap. III, para. 35. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 3*.

[12] A/58/167 and Add.1.

(*b*) Pursuing the political and socio-economic empowerment of rural women by supporting their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels, including in rural institutions through, inter alia, the provision of training and capacity-building programmes, including legal literacy;

(*c*) Integrating a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes, including budget policies, paying increased attention to the needs of rural women so as to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes adopted in all spheres and that the disproportionate number of rural women living in poverty is reduced;

(*d*) Ensuring that the perspectives of rural women are taken into account and that they participate in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and activities related to emergencies, natural disasters, humanitarian assistance, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction;

(*e*) Investing in and strengthening efforts to meet the basic needs of rural women through capacity-building and human resources development measures and the provision of a safe and reliable water supply and sanitation, nutritional programmes, education and literacy programmes, and health and social support measures, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS treatment, care and support;

(*f*) Designing and implementing policies that promote and protect the enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and creating an environment that does not tolerate violations of the rights of women and girls, including domestic violence;

(*g*) Developing specific assistance programmes and advisory services to promote economic skills of rural women in banking, modern trading and financial procedures and providing microcredit and other financial and business services to a greater number of women in rural areas for their economic empowerment;

(*h*) Taking steps towards ensuring that women's unpaid work and contributions to on-farm and off-farm production, including income generated in the informal sector, are visible, and assessing the feasibility of developing and improving mechanisms, such as time-use studies, to measure in quantitative terms unpaid work, recognizing the potential for it to be reflected in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes at the national and regional levels;

(*i*) Designing and revising laws to ensure that, where private ownership of land and property exists, rural women are accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through the right to inheritance, and undertaking administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital, appropriate technologies and access to markets and information,

(*j*) Promoting programmes to enable rural women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women household and childcare responsibilities;

4. *Invites* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to pay due attention to the situation of rural women in the consideration of the priority themes identified in its multi-year programme of work for the period 2002–2006;

5. *Invites* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system dealing with issues of development to address and support the empowerment of rural

women and their specific needs in their programmes and strategies, including in the context of globalization;

6. *Stresses* the need to identify the best practices for ensuring that rural women have access to and full participation in the area of information and communication technologies, inter alia, through specific studies, and invites the World Summit on the Information Society, in Geneva and Tunis, to take into consideration, while addressing gender issues, the priorities and needs of rural women and girls as active users of information and ensure their participation in developing and implementing global information and communication technology strategies;

7. *Invites* Member States, the United Nations and the relevant organizations of its system to ensure that the needs of rural women are mainstreamed into the integrated process of follow-up to the major summits and conferences in the economic and social fields, in particular the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the International Conference on Financing for Development, and the 2005 review of the progress achieved in implementing all the commitments made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[6] the Beijing Platform for Action[3] and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century";[4]

8. *Invites* Member States to take into consideration the concluding comments and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning their reports to the Committee when formulating policies and designing programmes focused on the improvement of the situation of rural women, including those to be developed and implemented in cooperation with relevant international organizations;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the present resolution, addressing different aspects of the empowerment of rural women, including the impact of macroeconomic policy frameworks on their situation.

77th plenary meeting
22 December 2003